



# Hoosier Responder

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## IDHS NAMES DISTRICT TASK FORCE COMMANDERS

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) has recently completed the appointment of all District Response Task Force Commanders. These appointments will continue the development of the regional emergency response task forces evolving into a statewide network of emergency support. The ten task forces are in different stages of development, but expected to be fully formed and operational by spring of 2012.

“These confirmations serve as the capstone achievement in structuralizing a concept that has been developing since 2005,” said IDHS Executive Director Joe Wainscott. “Before, during and after a disaster, the commanders have a great amount of responsibility. They are expected to oversee the structure, development, direction and response efforts of their region’s maturing emergency response task force.”

Staffed with local firefighters, law enforcement personnel, emergency medical services personnel, emergency managers, and other local emergency response professionals,

the district response task forces will support county emergency management agencies within the district.



**District 2 Commander:** Ron Patrick has been the Chief Deputy for the Pulaski County Sheriff’s Office for the last eight years. Patrick has also served in the Indiana Army National Guard for

more than 29 years. While with the guard, he was sent to Atlanta during the 1996 Olympics to serve in a Law Enforcement Support Platoon at the Georgia Dome, where he also assisted with the bombing in Centennial Park.

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## From the Director’s Chair-Executive Director Joe Wainscott CREATE A FAMILY COMMUNICATION PLAN THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

If your Holiday traditions are anything like mine, they undoubtedly center around loved ones. It’s the time of year for many of us when, above all else, we find ourselves blessed by and exceedingly thankful for our precious family and friends.

It is difficult to think about what it would be like if the ones closest to us were ever involved in a disaster or other serious public emergency. As emergency responders we are constantly encouraging Hoosiers to be prepared for all types of disasters and emergencies, but do we remember to talk with our own families about disaster preparedness? While the spirit of the holidays focuses our attention on our loved

ones, why not take a few moments to talk about how you would communicate with them in a serious emergency?

It is probably common sense to say that during a disaster, or other widespread emergency, communication with loved ones may be difficult. Cell towers, telephone lines and other communication infrastructure may be damaged. Communication service capabilities may be overwhelmed as large numbers of individuals in the affected area try to contact emergency services and connect with friends and family all at the same time.

If you attempt to make a call and it doesn’t

go through, there are a few contingency options you can try. The effectiveness of these methods depends greatly on a number of unpredictable variables, and there’s no guarantee any of them will work at all. You may have no way to communicate in a disaster, but at least these tips offer a plan B.



*(Continued on page 3)*

# SAFETY TIPS TO PREPARE FOR HARSH WINTER STORMS

As you are helping your family prepare for winter storms, consider these tips from the Indiana Department of Homeland Security.

Every home should have a disaster supplies kit to include: a battery-operated radio, flashlight, matches, extra batteries and an extra set of keys. Have an ample supply of wood for the fireplace and plenty of nonperishable foods that can be eaten without heating. Set aside bottled water and canned juices in case power and water supplies are interrupted. Other items to include in a disaster kit include prescription medication and items for young children or family members with special needs.

Other precautions can be taken in consideration for the home during winter months. These advisories include:

- Remove dead tree branches to prevent limbs from causing damage to the home.
- Clean gutters to prevent debris buildup and water damage.
- Check homeowner's insurance policy to ensure coverage is adequate for the type of weather in the area.



● Make sure auxiliary heaters and fireplaces are adequately maintained. Many fires related to alternative heating sources are preventable through maintenance. Before installing a wood-burning stove, check with local fire officials as to codes and proper installation techniques.

● Drain pipes if power goes off or if you plan an extended stay away from the home. To drain, turn off the water heater and main water supply, open all faucets in the house and drain the system by keeping the valves open. Drain all toilets by holding the lever down until the tank is empty.

● If well water is used, the pump's electric switch should be shut off and the pressure tank and system should be drained.

Even with the best maintenance and cautious driving, snow, ice and freezing temperatures can sometimes affect a



vehicle. Hazardous winter driving conditions induce crashes, which are the leading cause of death during winter storms. Prepare an emergency kit for a vehicle to include blankets, flash light, booster cables, extra warm clothing, rope and shovel, ice scraper, matches, non-perishable food and water.

Winterize motorized vehicles by keeping regular maintenance on the vehicle. Tips include:

- Check tire pressure and tread depth to ensure good traction.
- Check battery, exhaust system, heater and defroster.
- Check antifreeze, windshield wipers and blades.
- Ensure the four-wheel drive system and brakes are functioning. Keep at least a half tank of gas in your car at all times during the winter months, to keep the fuel lines from freezing.

For more winter safety tips and resources, visit <http://www.in.gov/dhs/getprepared> and click on the winter safety link. ■

## INDIANA NFA WEEKEND TRIP TO BE HELD FEBRUARY 26 & 27

The 2011 Indiana National Fire Academy (NFA) Weekend Trip will be held on February 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

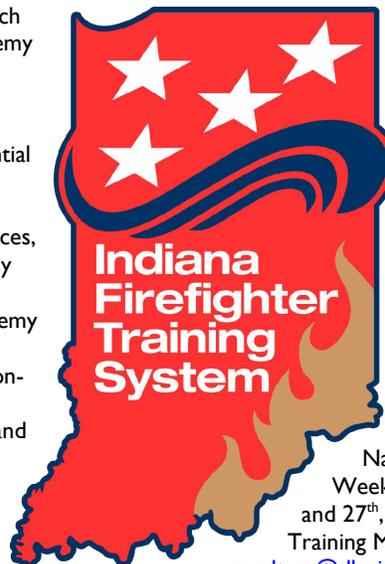
The 2-Day Program is offered at NFA as an educational opportunity for fire and rescue personnel from Indiana. These courses strengthen a state's fire service community through education, networking, and a shared collegial experience. It also offers students an opportunity to grow professionally through a quality educational experience and to increase their knowledge and skills to provide a safe and effective response to their communities.

The National Fire Academy conducts specialized training courses and advanced management programs of national impact. NFA offers these courses and programs in a concentrated, residential setting that is most conducive to intensive learning. This year, 24 states will travel to Maryland to take part in

training courses, with each state attending the academy on a different weekend throughout the year.

Any person with substantial involvement in fire prevention and control, emergency medical services, or fire-related emergency management activities is eligible to apply for academy courses. However, all National Fire Academy on-campus students must complete ICS 100 level and ICS 200 level training before arriving at the National Emergency Training Center.

Courses being offered at this year's weekend trip will be: Decision Making for Initial Company Officer (DMICO 457), Leadership I



(LS II 803), Leadership III (LS II 805), Methods of Enhancing Safety Education (MESE 344), and Training Operations in Small Departments (TOSD 290). Course materials and lodging are provided at no cost to representatives of career or volunteer departments and state or local government officials.

For more information about the 2011 Indiana National Fire Academy Weekend Trip on February 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, contact State Firefighter Training Manager Steve Walters at

[swalters@dhs.in.gov](mailto:swalters@dhs.in.gov). Deadline for registration is January 14. To Register for this event, visit <http://www.indianafiretraining.com/District7/> ■

## Director's Article [Continued from page 1](#)

### Tips for communicating during a disaster

**Try cell phones and land lines:** Cell towers and land lines may not be affected equally. If you can't reach your loved one via cell phone, try using a land line, and vice versa.

**Try Texting:** Unlike cell phone calls which rely on a continuous signal, texting only requires a short signal burst to transmit the message. If a cell tower is damaged and only functioning intermittently, text messages may be able to get through when a call cannot. If trying to contact emergency response personnel, remember you cannot text 911.

**In-state vs. Out-of-state:** Sometimes when local cell towers and phone lines are

overwhelmed it is easier to place long-distance calls. If you have a contact who lives out-of-state, or at least outside the immediate disaster area, you may find it easier to relay messages to others in the disaster area through them.

**Internet options:** If Internet capabilities are intact, communicating through email or social networking sites such as facebook and twitter may prove effective. You could also try registering through the Red Cross "Safe and Well" program which allows family members to update their status, and search for updates from loved ones. The website is available at [http://www.montanaredcross.org/Register\\_as\\_Safe\\_and\\_Well.php](http://www.montanaredcross.org/Register_as_Safe_and_Well.php).

You can also use the internet to stay connected to information sources like IDHS.

Texting "follow IDHS" to 40404 will allow you to receive IDHS updates via twitter.

Creating a communication plan does not have to be a formal or elaborate process. Having a short conversation with family and friends, and taking 5 to 10 minutes to document emergency contact numbers can make a big difference in a crisis. Take some time this holiday season to communicate with your loved ones about how you will stay in touch during a disaster.

For other tips on how to prepare for a disaster, visit the IDHS Get Prepared webpage at [www.in.gov/dhs/getprepared](http://www.in.gov/dhs/getprepared) ■

## HUSBAND NAMED TO IAEM CERTIFIED EMERGENCY MANAGER COMMISSION

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security's Director of Field Services, Gerri Husband, has been appointed to the Certified Emergency Manager Commission of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM). This position represents a great accomplishment for Husband, who has spent her entire career in the public safety field.

IAEM, which has more than 5,000 members worldwide, is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to promoting the "Principles of Emergency Management" and representing those professionals whose goals are saving lives and protecting property and the environment during emergencies and disasters.

The Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) Commission is made up of emergency management professionals including representatives from allied fields, educators, military and private industry personnel.

As a member of the CEM Commission, Husband will be tasked with reviewing applications for emergency management certification which includes assessment of training, education, references, experience, exams, management essay, and contribution to the field of emergency management. After completing this evaluation, applicants will be granted either CEM or AEM distinction.



**Director of IDHS Field Services Division—Gerri Husband**

IDHS has assisted emergency managers in their application for CEM certification; most recently by sponsoring 22 emergency managers. By achieving this designation, these individuals show that they are devoted to the field of emergency management and will continue to work to improve their knowledge and abilities.

While Husband will not be able to review any applications to the CEM Commission from Indiana, having her in this position will be advantageous to Hoosier emergency managers. "Hopefully we will inspire emergency managers to recognize that CEM certification is available to them," said Husband. "IDHS will continue to engage people to pursue these credentials."

Starting her career as a member of the Lewis Township Volunteer Fire Department in Coalmont, Indiana, Husband has worked her way through all levels of emergency response and management. She served as the EMA director of Clay County before working as the local public health coordinator for Clay County. Upon joining IDHS, Husband has risen through the ranks to become the director of the field services division, serving as an exercise training manager, training branch chief, and assistant director of field services within the department.

Husband's appointment to this commission will not interfere with her responsibilities with IDHS. She will continue as the director of the field services division, travelling to Falls Church, Virginia 2-3 times each year for the CEM Commission meetings. ■

## INAUGURAL INVISION AWARD PRESENTED TO ISP TELECOMMUNICATIONS SUPERVISOR

Indiana State Police telecommunications operator Connie Poer was recently recognized by the Indiana Integrated Public Safety Commission for her leadership in telecommunications. The INvision award was given to Poer on September 29<sup>th</sup> at the 2010 Indiana Interoperable Communications Conference in Indianapolis.

Poer is the first recipient of this award, which is designed to recognize and honor an individual who has made a significant contribution to the field of interoperable communications in Indiana. The INvision



Award will honor vision, creative approaches and consistent dedication to the mission of improving cooperation and coordination among all Indiana agencies and public safety disciplines.

She is the Telecommunications Supervisor of the Indiana State Police Region IV Regional Dispatch Center in Versailles. She is a resident of North Vernon with her husband, Randy, and children, Douglas and Kaitlin.

Poer was nominated for this award by IDHS

District 9 Administrative Coordinator. Tracy Lightfield. "Connie Poer was ahead of her time. Many years ago Connie saw the need for interoperable communications and had the vision to start up an 800 MHz Users Group in southeast Indiana. She not only rallied the players, she offered the training room at the Versailles Post and served as the contact person and moderator to get all the stakeholders in Southeast Indiana to the table to discuss best practices, SOP development, and round table discussions overall on what was 'new' to so many of us. This was long before there was an annual conference or any other statewide groups. Had it not been for Connie's efforts in bringing everyone to the table, we would not have had the success we have."

A lifelong resident of Indiana, Poer graduated from South Dearborn High School in Aurora. She began her career in 1986 as a data input operator with ISP. She was later promoted to telecommunications operator in 1988 until she was again promoted in 1997 to telecommunications supervisor at the ISP IV Regional Dispatch Center in Versailles.

Any Indiana public safety professional or first responder who has actively promoted improved interoperable communications is eligible to receive the award. To nominate someone, visit [www.in.gov/ipsc/2643.htm](http://www.in.gov/ipsc/2643.htm).

## FIRE SPOTLIGHT: Newburgh Fire Department

The Newburgh Volunteer Fire Department serves the town of Newburgh and Ohio Township in Warrick County. The department currently staffs 40 volunteers and 10 cadet firefighters, who make an average of 350 runs per year.

Being located on the Ohio River brings extra challenges to the department, which developed a water response team. This team consists of surface swimmers, ice rescue personnel, boat drivers, dive tenders, and public safety divers.

Newburgh Fire Department Chief Paul Campbell uses these resources to continue the goals of the department. They strive to promote safety and minimize the loss of life and property by means of fire prevention, fire education safety, fire suppression and emergency rescue.

Campbell also hopes to promote and encourage improvement in the practices and skills of its members related to all aspects of fire fighting and rescue. ■



**Newburgh Volunteer Fire Department**  
540 State Street  
Newburgh Indiana  
(812) 853-7651

## IDHS HOSTS EXPERT ON HEALTHCARE & EMS PREPARATION FOR NATIONAL SPECIAL SECURITY EVENTS

Preparing for large scale events such as the Super Bowl is a daunting task. Cooperation among various government agencies is essential to keeping the public safe from harm. The world will be watching as Indianapolis hosts Super Bowl XLVI on February 12, 2012, and emergency medical officials are working to ensure that they will be prepared to handle emergencies that could come with this event.

In an effort to help promote preparedness for major events, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS), in partnership with Clarian Health, will host Scott Bookman as he gives his speech titled "Healthcare & EMS Preparation for National Special Security Events." This event will take place on December 10<sup>th</sup> in the Pettigrew Auditorium

at Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis. Bookman is the chief paramedic for Denver Health and helped create emergency medical preparedness plans for the city of Denver during the 2008 Democratic National Convention.



Bookman is widely considered an expert on the topic of medical preparation for major events, and his article "Hospital Group Preparation for the 2008 Democratic

National Convention" in the *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management* outlines specific steps taken by the city of Denver and medical personnel during the 2008 convention.

Drawing on experiences and lessons learned from the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver, Colorado, Chief Bookman will discuss the challenges and opportunities associated with the healthcare sector and EMS planning for national special security events. This event is free and open to the public, but seating is limited. To reserve your seat for this event, please RSVP to Courtney VanJelgerhuis by emailing [cvanjelg@meshcoalition.org](mailto:cvanjelg@meshcoalition.org) or via phone at (317) 630-7409. ■

## NATION'S FIRST SIDE-LOAD AMBULANCE IN SERVICE WITH GIBSON COUNTY EMS

The Gibson County Emergency Medical Service has recently purchased a new side-load ambulance. This type of vehicle is the first of its kind to be used in the United States and will give EMS providers extra protection in a crash.

The vehicle was purchased from Elkhart-based ambulance dealer McCoy Miller. The new design features doors on both sides of the rear box of the ambulance instead of the traditional rear-loading doors. The side-load design will allow ambulance workers to sit facing forward or backward, which will help protect them if the ambulance is involved in an accident. The design improves safety for workers by allowing the seats to slide to multiple positions while still seated. This allows access to the patient and all controls and supplies without requiring the ambulance worker to



stand up.

"The first thing I thought of was the safety of our crews, with the seating harnesses and being able to move up and down on the rails on each side of the patient," says Gibson County EMS Director Dan Alvey. "We also like having access to all the controls on each side of the vehicle, versus having to just get up and move around."

While the new design offers obvious safety advantages for workers, there are concerns of how well it will work in certain situations. Since a patient must be loaded through the side of the vehicle, some roadside emergencies may prove to



be difficult due to limited loading space. In addition, some hospital ambulance loading areas are designed for rear entry ambulances and not the new side-load design. "That's something you'll have to preplan," says Alvey. "You'll have to figure

out when you're arriving either on scene or at a hospital which way you're going to load the patient and bring them out."

In order to get the new ambulance in service, Alvey had to obtain waivers from the Indiana State EMS Commission, since specifications call for rear-entry ambulances only. The purpose of the new design is to improve the safety of workers and patients inside the ambulance. ■

## THE HOLIDAY SEASON CREATES EXTRA FIRE RISKS IN THE HOME

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), firefighters respond to about three times the daily average of cooking fires on Thanksgiving, making it the leading day for home cooking fires in the U.S. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security would like all Hoosiers to take a few extra steps to stay safe this holiday season.

"Nearly all firefighters have witnessed the heartbreaking way a fire can destroy a family's holiday in a matter of just a few minutes," said Indiana State Fire Marshal Jim Greeson. "The holiday season is a special time of year, and the last thing anyone wants is for a devastating fire to ruin the festivities. Stay alert when you're in the kitchen, pay attention to what you're cooking, and use common sense."

Cooking fires are another cause of accidental fires during the holiday season. Follow these tips to ensure that cooking a Thanksgiving turkey doesn't turn into a holiday accident.

- Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling or broiling food. If you leave the kitchen for even a short period of time, turn off the stove.
- If you are simmering, baking, roasting, or boiling food, check it regularly, remain in

the home while food is cooking and use a timer to remind you to check on food.

- Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire.
- Keep flammable materials like oven mitts, wooden utensils, food packaging, towels, curtains, etc., away from your stovetop.
- Keep a lid nearby when you're cooking to smother small grease fires. Smother the fire by sliding the lid over the pan and turning off the stovetop. Leave the pan covered until it is completely cooled.
- For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed.

Another holiday hazard is the Christmas tree. A heat source placed too close to a dry tree is a fire hazard. A small fire that spreads to a Christmas tree can grow very quickly. Other tips to prevent tree fires include:

- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Replace any string of lights that have worn or broken cords and bulbs.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights when leaving home or going to bed.
- Do not overload electrical circuits when plugging in the tree.
- Move the tree from the home when it begins dropping needles.

In recent years, deep fried turkeys have become a popular staple at the dinner table on Thanksgiving, but preparations can be very dangerous and lead to burns or other injuries, and the destruction of property. The NFPA estimates that deep fryers cause 1,000 home fires every year.

"Consider letting professional establishments, such as grocery stores, specialty food retailers, and restaurants handle the preparation of deep fried turkey," said Greeson, "If you must fry the turkey yourself, use extreme caution and follow all manufacturer's directions carefully."

Always use a deep fryer or turkey fryer outside on a flat surface away from your home or on a wooden deck. Never bring it inside as the open flame and grease can easily cause a fire to spread out of control. Never overfill the fryer with oil and be sure to always have someone watching while the flame is on.

The holiday season presents extra dangers that can easily be avoided with proper care and attention. By following the tips given, you can help prevent an accidental fire and have a happy holiday season. For more safety tips, visit [www.in.gov/dhs/getprepared/](http://www.in.gov/dhs/getprepared/) ■

**DISTRICT RESPONSE TASK FORCE COMMANDERS** *(Continued from page 1)*



**District 3 Commander:**  
Brandon Taylor has served as director of Huntington County EMA for five years. Before this, Taylor spent 14 years as a volunteer firefighter, spending 11 of those years as an officer and five as the fire chief. Taylor is very active in providing training in his county and district, as well as through the District Training Council.



**District 8 Commander:**  
Jerry Kindred has spent many years in the emergency response field. Kindred is currently a paramedic with the Jackson County EMS. He has been instrumental in developing, building and training the current District 8 Decontamination Response Team, which included obtaining the funding through grants, training and equipping responders in hazmat decontamination response. In addition to his duties as a paramedic and district response task force, Kindred sits on the Jackson County EMA Advisory Board, and Jackson County Local Emergency Planning Committee.

continues to teach various courses in CPR, ACLS, PALS, and EMT basic through paramedic. Deich joined the District 9 Task Force in September 2007 with the planning of the Muscatatuck exercise.



**District 10 Commander:**  
Al Perdue joined the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers in 1969. Following his service, Perdue volunteered with Luce Township Fire Department for ten years. Using the knowledge gained from his service, Perdue became the director of Spencer County EMA in 1992. Since this time, he has continued to gain training and experience to help form various teams, including Spencer County Wilderness Search and Rescue Team, Spencer County Water Rescue Team, Spencer County Haz-Mat Team, as well as designing the Spencer County Emergency Operations Center. He was named the District 10 Task Force Commander in 2007 and continues to hold this position.



**District 5 Commander:**  
William Brown has served with the Indianapolis Fire Department since 1979. Currently, Brown is battalion chief assigned as the task force coordinator for Indiana Task Force

One, one of 28 Federal Urban Search & Rescue teams under the Department of Homeland Security. His skills have been used as an urban search & rescue specialist to respond Hurricanes Gustav, Ike, Isabel, Jeanne, Dennis, Katrina, Ophelia, Rita, and Wilma and the Haiti earthquake.



**District 9 Commander:**  
Eric Deich's professional life has been spent working with law enforcement, fire service, 911 communications, EMS, animal control, as well leading several EMS classes. He has worked with Austin Police Department as well as the Orange County Police Department. Deich achieved Advanced EMT certification and became a paramedic in 1998. He currently works for the Scott County EMS and

Previous district response task force commander appointments had been made in recent months. These include District 1 Commander Russell Shirley, District 4 Commander Richard Doyle, District 6 Commander Shannon Henry, and District 7 Commander Melissa Buell. ■

**USE CAUTION WHEN MAKING ONLINE PURCHASES THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

Many Hoosiers will use the internet to make their holiday purchases. The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) would like to remind Hoosiers that all online activities, including shopping, need to be done cautiously.

"The Internet has created a great atmosphere for increased business activity in Indiana and the country as a whole," said IDHS Executive Director Joe Wainscott. "It can connect buyers and sellers from across the globe faster than ever before. Unfortunately, it can also very quickly connect criminals and other malicious individuals with upstanding citizens, and that's something we want people to know how to avoid."

Here are some tips to help keep your personal information safe this holiday season.

**Holiday e-mail safety:**

- Email advertisement and spam traffic may increase during the holiday season. If the

subject of an email from a known or unknown sender seems suspicious, delete the email without opening it. If an advertisement or other offer sounds too good to be true, it may be. Check it out through a reliable source.

- Never open email attachments or follow embedded links from senders whom you do not know.
- Never convey personal information, such as credit card numbers, bank account numbers, Social Security numbers, passwords, etc. in emails.

**Online shopping safety:**

- Keep any virus protection or other computer security software updated on the computer you intend to use for online shopping.
- Make sure your Internet connection is secure. Before you give your payment information, check for indicators that security software is in place.

- Use complex passwords to safeguard personal information like credit card numbers and billing addresses.
- Avoid visiting unknown web pages where malicious software could be downloaded.

**Safe online purchasing:**

- When making online purchases with a credit or debit card, use a secure online escrow broker to provide payment.
- If available, consider using your bank's virtual credit card service. Virtual credit cards can only be used once and usually expire in 24 hours.
- Make sure you print or save a soft copy of every transaction receipt in case there is confusion later about payment.

For more information about online safety, read the IDHS online shopping fact sheet at [http://www.in.gov/dhs/files/online\\_shopping\\_fact\\_sheet2.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dhs/files/online_shopping_fact_sheet2.pdf) ■

### IDHS TO OFFER DISTRICT TASK FORCE MOBILIZATION AND DEPLOYMENT COURSE

The Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) will offer a District Response Task Force mobilization and deployment course to help continue training and education for emergency responders in Indiana. The course will be held at the Lynnville Fire Department on January 19-20 between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Registration is open to anyone who has completed ICS 100 and 700 courses with priority given to members of a district response task force

(DRTF).

This course will teach participants the process and fundamentals of district response task force preparation, alert, notification, mobilization, convoy, integration of operations, and demobilization during a state activation. It will also cover mobile support unit guidance, legal issues, and administration and logistics of DTRFs.

There is no charge to attend this course and lodging is available for those who meet travel requirements. Details and registration information may be found at the IDHS Training Opportunities calendar under the Online Services heading to the right of the page at [www.in.gov/dhs](http://www.in.gov/dhs). Any questions pertaining to this course can also be directed to Ashlee Grisel at [agrisel@dhs.in.gov](mailto:agrisel@dhs.in.gov).

### PURDUE UNIVERSITY FIRE DEPARTMENT CHIEF NAMED FIRE CHIEF OF THE YEAR

While most only notice a fire department when a building is on fire, or someone is in need of rescue, much of a department's efforts often go unnoticed. Fire prevention is the top priority for firefighters across the state and the Purdue University Fire Department is an example of a department making great strides in preventing fires.



Purdue University Fire Department Chief Kevin Ply strongly emphasizes the importance of reducing the risk of fire, and these efforts were recognized by the Indiana Emergency Response Conference as Fire Chief of the Year in the career department category. "One of my goals when I became fire chief was to get the message out to

students to think about safety, and we're getting people to participate in classrooms, residence halls and online," stated Ply.

As fire chief of a major university, Ply is faced with many challenges that are unique to his department. He has been extremely proactive in ensuring the safety of the students at Purdue University through the implementation of fire prevention and education programs, including the creation of a full-time fire prevention specialist. These actions have shown improved awareness of fire safety throughout the Purdue University campus.



## Indiana Department of Homeland Security



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